

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

Initially, please note that the provisional election of Species II is hereby affirmed. Also, please note that claims 8, 9, 12-14 and 17-23 are believed to be generic for each of Species I and II.

In response to the drawing objection as expressed in section 3 of the Office Action, claims 10, 15, 16 and 25 have been amended by substituting --driving-- for "operating".

In response to the drawing objection as expressed in section 4 of the Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that one having ordinary skill in the art would fully understand, from the original specification and drawings, how the internal gear of the cap is moved in order to disengage from the external gear of the rotational member while being retained by the hexagonal shaft. In this regard, with reference to the embodiment as depicted in Figures 1-4, the internal gear 4 of the rotational member engages with the pawl 6 of the driving member, and the rotational member rotates as the spring storage member 9 rotates. Accordingly, the fitting portion 3 on the outside of this rotational member rotates, and the shoestring 23 is fastened as the fastening member 22 rotates due to its engagement with the fitting portion 3. With the spring storage member 9 operating in a reverse motion, engagement between the internal gear 4 of the rotational member and the pawl 6 is cancelled. And, with reference to the embodiment depicted in Figures 5-8, while the internal structure of the rotational member is the same as that of the embodiment of Figures 1-4 (i.e. the coupling arrangement between the spring storage member 9, the pawl 6, and the internal gear 4 is the same), the external gear 304 engages with the internal gear 303 of the cap 324. The above is explicitly shown in the figures, and accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this drawing objection should not be maintained.

Claims 8-11 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Morell et al.; claims 8-10 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Bidoia; claims 17-25 were allowed; and claims 12-15 were objected to as containing allowable subject matter but depending from a rejected base claim. The indication of allowable subject matter is greatly appreciated; however, claims 12-15 have not been rewritten in independent form because for reasons to follow it is respectfully submitted that claim 8, as currently amended, is not anticipated by either of Morell et al. and Bidoia.

In rejecting claim 8 as being anticipated by Morell et al., the Examiner equated component 68 of Morell et al. to **both** the "operating member of the fastening member" and the "rotational member" as recited in claim 8. Claim 8 requires a specific operational relationship between the operating member and the rotational member. In this regard, claim 8 requires that the rotational member is connected to the operating member, and that the operating member is to be rotated via the rotational member. Thus, from claim 8 it is clear that the operating member and rotational member are separate and distinct pieces of structure, whereby it is respectfully submitted to be inappropriate to read these two pieces of structure on the same element of Morell et al., as done by the Examiner. For this reason, claim 8 is not anticipated by Morell et al.

With regard to the rejection based on Bidoia, claim 8 has been amended to require that the driving mechanism includes a spring member such that as the rotational member is rotated in the predetermined direction the spring member is wound. Bidoia does not teach or suggest such a spring member.

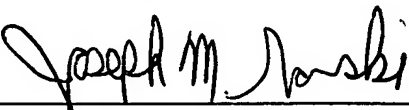
In this regard, while a spring 17 is present in Bidoia, this spring is not wound upon rotation of knob 37. Indeed, spring 17 is a compression spring and is not to be wound at all.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

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